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FOR PATENT**

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(54) Improvements to unit for displaying and dispensing rectangular-shaped items.(51) International patent class (Int. Cl.<sup>3</sup>) B 07 C 5/36.

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(71) Applicant: Jean-Louis CORJON, France.

(72) Inventor: Jean-Louis Corjon.

(73) Patentee:

(74) Legal representative: The Faber Firm.  
34, rue de Leningrad, 75008 Paris.

This invention involves improvements to units for displaying and dispensing rectangular-shaped items such as packs of cigarettes, cassette tapes and similar items.

These units commonly include a frame comprised of two longitudinal segments and of a series of cross mounts for the items spread between the longitudinal segments. The cross mounts can be moved to adjust the space between them; and between each pair of cross mounts is an elastic feed. The longitudinal segments are comprised of L-shaped side panels, one arm of which has a channel; the cross mounts, in turn, have a butt at each end, comprising a guide. To assemble the unit, the butt ends are mounted into the channels while the feeds rest on one of the arms of the side panels and are braced with elastic strips.

A layout of this kind has a certain number of disadvantages. The mounting is long and, when the user wants to change the display, he must disassemble and then reassemble the entire piece.

One of the goals of this invention is to remedy the various disadvantages.

For this invention, the improvements apply to such units as have a frame comprised of two longitudinal segments and of a series of cross mounts for the items to be dispensed spread between the longitudinal segments with an elastic feed between each pair of cross mounts. The units are characterized by the fact that the longitudinal segments are each composed of a side panel with a rib from the surface of which extends a bar terminating in a strip; and each cross mount has two wings fitted with notches, along their free edge, designed to embed the strips elastically.

The layout renders assembly simple and inexpensive, and can be changed at any time without disassembly of the entire piece.

It is preferable that the feeds have wings, the free edges of which are fitted with notches designed to embed the strips elastically.

Another characteristic of the invention is that one of the side panels has an L-shaped section while the other is comprised of a single flat plate. Thus, for example, a clear retention bar can be placed against the free wing of the L-shaped side panel to form a stop end.

Finally, the depth of the notches in the cross mounts and feeds corresponds to the height of the strips on the side panels so that the piece is perfectly rigid. The free edges of the feed and of the wings on the cross mounts push against the rib of the side panels and thus provide the piece with great stability.

The invention will now be described in greater detail using a particular construction method, offered only as an example, and illustrated in the appended drawings wherein:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of a unit according to the terms of the invention;

Fig. 2 is a cross-section according to line II-II of Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is a cross-section according to line III-III of Fig. 1;

Fig. 4 is a cross-section according to line IV-IV of Fig. 2;

Fig. 5 is a cross-section according to line V-V of Fig. 3;

Fig. 6 is an enlarged view of a detail.

The unit illustrated in these figures is intended for use in stores to display such items as packs of cigarettes, cassettes tapes or any rectangular-shaped item.

The unit is set on, or attached to, a bracket 1 - preferably one that can be moved vertically along the wall.

The unit has an L-shaped side panel 2 with two wings 2a and 2b. Wing 2b has a bar 3 running parallel with wing 2a and terminates in a strip 4. Wing 2b has a rim 9 on its inner surface, running parallel with the strip 4.

The unit has a second side panel 5 formed by a rib 6 from the middle of which extends a bar 7 terminating in a strip 8.

There is provision for a series of cross mounts 10 and for feeds 11 arranged between each pair of cross mounts 10.

Each cross mount 10 has a diaphragm 12 on either side from which extend the edges 13 whose undersides have wings 14.

The wings 14 have a notch 15 near one end and a notch 16 near the other.

Notch 15 has a flared opening 15a connected to a circular section 15b through a narrowed section 15c.

Notch 16 has a flared opening 16a connected to a circular section 16b through a narrowed section 16c.

Section 15b of each notch 15 corresponds to the section on the strip 4 while section 16b of the notches 16 has a diameter corresponding to the diameter of the strip 8.

Each cross mount 10 is made of a plastic material endowed with a certain elasticity and is attached by fitting notches 15 and 16 onto corresponding strips 4 and 8 with a slight elastic distortion.

Each feed 11 is comprised of a U-shaped plastic panel with two wings 25 and 26 and a web plate 18. The web plate 18 has a median longitudinal slot 19 along which a peg 20 is guided. The peg 20 is fitted with a catch 21 onto which an elastic collar 22 is hooked. The collar 22 is also hooked onto a nipple 23 and is guided along an axis 24 stretching between the two wings 25 and 26.

The axis 24 is positioned at one end of the side panel adjacent to side panel 2 while the nipple 23 is positioned at the other end. The peg 20 is thus pulled elastically towards side panel 2.

Wing 25 has a notch 28 near one end and wing 26 has a notch 29 near the other. Notches 28 and 29 are designed to work with strips 4 and 8 respectively and assume shapes identical to those of notches 15 and 16.

Note that notches 15 and 28 have depths such that, when the cross mounts 10 and the feeds 11 are in place, the free edge of the wings marked 14 and of the wings marked 24 and 25 butt up against wing 2b.

Similarly, the depth of notches 16 and 29 correspond to the height of the bar 7 and of the strip 8 so that the free edges of wings 14, 25 and 26 push against the rib 6.

There is provision for a slight gap 30 between the ends of the cross mounts 10 and the feeds 11 and wing 2a of side panel 2. A clear plastic bar 31 can be inserted in the space to create a stop end to retain the items to be dispensed.

The unit is very easy to use. The items to be dispensed rest against the edges 13 of two neighboring cross mounts 12 and are pushed by the peg 20 against the bar 31. The items can be withdrawn individually for sale.

To change the layout or the spacing of the cross mounts 10, simply apply pressure to release the notches 15 and 16 from the strips 4 and 8. A feed 11 can be removed in a similar fashion and repositioned. The installation or removal of a cross mount or feed can be done without involving other elements.

Obviously, the invention is not limited to the construction process described and illustrated here; many changes in detail can be made without, thereby, straying from the framework of the invention.

## PATENT CLAIMS

1 - Improvements to units for displaying and dispensing rectangular-shaped items such as packs of cigarettes, cassette tapes and similar items. The unit typically includes a frame comprised of two longitudinal segments (2, 5) and of a series of cross mounts (10) for the items to be dispensed spread between the longitudinal segments and between each pair of cross mounts (10). There is provision for an elastic feed (11) characterized by the fact that the longitudinal segments (2, 5) are each composed of a side panel with a rib from the surface of which extends a bar terminating in a strip (4, 8); each cross mount (10) has two wings (14) fitted with notches (15, 16), along their free edge, designed to embed the strips elastically.

2 - Improvements to units for displaying and dispensing rectangular-shaped items such as packs of cigarettes, cassette tapes and similar items, according to claim 1, characterized by the fact that the feeds (11) have wings (25, 26), the free edges of which are fitted with notches (28, 29) designed to embed the strips (4, 8) elastically.

3 - Improvements to units for displaying and dispensing rectangular-shaped items such as packs of cigarettes, cassette tapes and similar items, according to claim 1, characterized by the fact that one of the side panels has an L-shaped section while the other is comprised of a single flat plate.

4 - Improvements to units for displaying and dispensing rectangular-shaped items such as packs of cigarettes, cassette tapes and similar items, according to claim 1, characterized by the fact that the depth of the notches (15, 16) in the cross mounts (10) and the feeds (11) corresponds to the height of the strips on the side panels (2, 5).